

VZCZCXRO0829  
PP RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHROV RUEHSR  
DE RUEHFR #3843/01 1581256  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 071256Z JUN 06  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8227  
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 003843

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/01/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [FR](#) [EUN](#) [COE](#) [KPAL](#) [CY](#) [TU](#)  
SUBJECT: FRENCH MFA CFSP CHIEFS ON EU DYNAMICS

REF: PARIS 2313

Classified By: Acting PolCouns Bruce Turner for reasons 1.4 (B & D).

¶1. (C) Summary: In a June 6 meeting, the MFA's CFSP chiefs lamented a certain absence of political will in the EU, but argued that the EU had largely succeeded, through an increase in ESDP operations, in recapturing some momentum following rejection of the EU constitutional treaty. They indicated that France was slowly moving toward a more critical view of Russia and personally dreaded upcoming discussions on Turkey's progress vis-a-vis Cyprus. They also noted the difficulties of achieving EU consensus on foreign policy, citing differing views on treatment of Hamas as well as other Europeans' wariness of increased involvement in Africa. They described the Austrian presidency as fair, if somewhat lacking in dynamism and vision, intimating that they would expect more from the Finns come July. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Acting PolCouns and Poloff met June 6 with MFA Chief for CFSP Jean-Louis Falconi and his deputy Pascal Le Deunff to discuss how French views toward the EU's evolving common security, foreign and defense policies had in the context of, or as compensation for, French rejection a year ago of the institutional reforms contained in the EU constitutional treaty. Falconi described the EU as currently lacking in the political will to pursue closer integration, which he blamed largely on the EU's failure to articulate an updated vision of its raison d'etre. In the early days it had been enough to overcome the divisions of war, but this no longer provided adequate motivation for a generation that took Europe for granted the ability to travel to or study in other European countries. They lacked appreciation.

¶3. (C) Le Deunff added that the absence of political will was more characteristic of the EU's older members than its newer ones. The problem was that these countries were often mostly focused on Russia. After some discussion, Le Deunff conceded that this renewed vigilance was justified, and he allowed that the EU -- including France -- was slowly reconsidering how it approached Russia following Russia's bullying on Ukraine. He was proud, however, of the EU's success in working with the U.S. to support Ukraine during the Orange Revolution. Asked about Cyprus, Falconi was more circumspect, saying only that he was not looking forward to the review of Turkey's progress in the autumn. He wondered also whether Turkey's ardor for membership was slowly cooling.

¶4. (C) Using Hamas as an example, Falconi nonetheless indicated that gaining EU consensus on a common foreign policy position was increasingly difficult. Although France was in favor of setting down a general EU line on principle and was generally hard-line on Hamas, a number of other EU member states -- he cited the UK and Sweden -- favored a much more ad hoc, case-by-case approach. This created problems for France, not only because it tended to approach problems in a Cartesian manner, but also because of its obligations under its convention with the COE to permit delegations to travel to meetings. (Note: Per reftel, France in this

instance did not issue visas to the Hamas-affiliated officials. End note.)

15. (C) Africa, he said, was also difficult. While France, the UK, Belgium and Portugal were keenly interested in a greater EU role on the continent, a number of other member states continued to have reservations. Falconi nonetheless expressed satisfaction with the EU mission to the DRC, as well as to Gaza. On the DRC, he was delighted that the Poles had come up with a contribution of 200 personnel, adding that even the Slovaks had come up with two. (Note: The DRC mission will be headquartered in Potsdam, with France and Germany providing the bulk of the forces.) He noted that EU funding for ESDP operations had increased from some 60 million to well over 100 million euros, which was enabling the EU to assume a more global role despite its recent institutional setbacks. (Note: Falconi did not break down the CFSP budget, but we understand that the 100 million amount includes CFSP secretariat expenditures, such as for Solana's travels.) We asked whether the EU's perceived successes were proof that the best course for the future would be to demonstrate the EU's usefulness through pragmatic actions rather than institutional chest-thumping. Falconi did not disagree, while insisting that EU institutions would nonetheless need to be reformed in order to make the EU more effective.

16. (C) The conclusion of the meeting was interrupted by a call from the Austrian Presidency to begin coordination on how to respond to Montenegro's request for recognition. Falconi commented that the Austrians bent over backwards to be fair, but sometimes at the expense of efficiency and effectiveness. He concluded that they lacked political leadership, while adding that absence of leadership was still

PARIS 00003843 002 OF 002

preferable to a presidency that attempted to hold the other member states hostage to its own parochial interests. He looked forward to the Finnish chairmanship, with Le Deunff suggesting that the U.S. would find easy access for read-outs. Please visit Paris' Classified Website at:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.cfm>

STAPLETON